

## **UPENN TCORS: Tobacco Product Messaging in a Complex Communication Environment**

Effects of Implicit Messaging by Cigarette Pack Color on Smoking Behaviors (Project 3)

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### **Abstract:**

Under the Family Smoking Prevention Tobacco Control Act (FSPTCA), descriptors such as 'light', 'mild', and 'low tar' were banned from cigarette packaging to avoid misleading smokers about product safety. The tobacco industry countered the FDA-mandated labeling change by introducing a refined color coding scheme to cigarette packs to imply that cigarettes are "light"; 'full flavor' cigarette packs would continue to be colored red and 'lights' would now be colored gold. Given the FDA's role in regulating cigarette labeling, and the potential for mandated use of plain cigarette packaging (tan or olive coloring) as is done in some other countries, this project will examine the effects of changes in cigarette packaging color on product beliefs and tobacco use behaviors in adult regular smokers. Further, with the potential for graphic warning labels to be adopted in the future, a second goal is to understand how graphic versus text warning labels moderate the influence of packaging changes on these outcomes. The project will recruit 360, current daily cigarette smokers to a 50-day protocol using a randomized factorial design with two factors: (1) cigarette pack color manipulation (within subject: red, gold, plain packaging) and (2) warning label manipulation (between subject: graphic vs. standard text). To evaluate effects of changes in cigarette package coloring, participants will smoke cigarettes throughout the study in different colored packages during three 15-day study periods (order counterbalanced). The primary outcome measures will be smoking behavior (average daily cigarette consumption) and cigarette risk beliefs. Secondary outcomes include smoking topography (i.e., cigarette puff volume) and subjective ratings of the cigarettes. The specific aims of this study are: 1) to examine the effect of changes in cigarette package color on smoking behaviors and beliefs about cigarette risks; and to examine the main and interacting effects of warning label features.